

**WAGNER GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE  
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY**

**Doctoral Research Seminar  
Qualitative Research Methods – PHD-GP 5905-001  
Spring 2016  
(REVISED VERSION FEB 1)**

Professor Sonia Ospina,  
Puck, 3075; Ext. 87478  
e-mail address: sonia.ospina@nyu.edu

**Course Description:**

This course offers a hands-on opportunity for doctoral and advanced masters students to experience the practice of qualitative research. We will address the nature of qualitative research in the administrative and policy sciences, with ample opportunities to discuss the implications of the choices made in designing, implementing and reporting the findings of a “mock” project which we will determine in class, with your input. The course will require a considerable investment of time, with intensive reading and writing, recurrent team discussions based on assignments, and individual fieldwork (with journal writing before, during and after site visits).

**Course pre-requisite:** Doctoral Research Seminar: Research Methods (or equivalent, approved by instructor).

**Course objectives:**

By appreciating the complexities and opportunities associated with doing rigorous and credible qualitative research, at the end of the course, students will:

- Recognize the uniqueness and distinctiveness of qualitative research in public management and policy areas, particularly in comparison to the positivist and post-positivist qualitative research cultures.
- Distinguish qualitative methodological approaches –from interpretive to positivist–as well as traditions of qualitative inquiry—ethnography, case study, narrative inquiry, phenomenology, grounded theory, action research, etc –and appreciate their advantages and limitations for research in public service.
- Discuss competently selected problems and issues associated with theory, design, implementation, reporting and publication of qualitative research in public service (while concentrating primarily on interview projects embedded within a given tradition).
- Advance and deepen skills in managing selected design, data collection, analysis and writing strategies of qualitative research, via exercises and some field experience.

- Become acquainted with published research articles modeling theoretical, methodological and empirical decisions in the qualitative study of public problems and issues of importance to public service.

**Required texts** (*be sure to get the latest editions*):

Booth, W, G Colomb & J Williams. *The Craft of Research*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008

Maxwell, Joseph. *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2013

Miles, M., M Huberman & J. Saldaña. *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2014.

**Recommended texts:** (highly recommended if you plan to do qualitative research in the future, and will be on reserve – we will read pieces of each)

Basic textbooks:

Creswell, John. *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among 5 Approaches*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2012

Patton, Q.M. 2005. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. 3d edition. M. Thousand Oaks, Sage

Advanced discussions about the craft:

Brady, H. & D. Collier (Ed). 2010. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Yanow, D. & Peregrine Schwartz-Shea. 2014. *Interpretation and Method. Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York: M.E. Sharpe

Please find additional required readings from selected sources in the schedule of assignments. Students should be prepared to put a fairly large amount of time doing the readings and exercises associated with them.

**Course requirements:**

Students will apply readings and written assignments to a “mock” research project chosen within a constrained set of options, from topics proposed by course participants. We will spend class time debriefing on the experience of "doing" research. Forming groups to

work on 3-4 projects will ensure ample room for discussion and collective reflection – inside and outside of the classroom – of the decisions made along the way. Class time will be spent reviewing challenges and issues as the projects advance, and connecting these to the readings.

Students are responsible for doing some **fieldwork** out side of class time. They should create a schedule of entry into the field to ensure doing a minimum of **two interviews** and a few **field observations** as prescribed by class schedule, so that we can use these for class exercises. Students will keep **individual journals** with field notes and personal reflections of the mock project as it develops over time, writing **analytical memos** as needed.

Students will be expected to complete a series of **10 short assignments** and **3 long assignments** throughout the course. The assignments are devised as opportunities to practice skills of design, collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting. Experience doing these will ground class discussions. (Assignments are described in more detail in the syllabus under the “Schedule of Classes”).

Even though pairs or teams of students will implement the mock project, **each student will present a final individual Portfolio** with materials based on the work for the mock project. It will include some group products but also some independent writing from each student, including some journal entries and interview and observation memos developed over time per instructions in the syllabus.

### Grading

*No late assignments will be accepted for grading, unless agreed upon in advance with the professor.*

Course grade will be distributed as follows:

Assignment	Points	%	Due date
12 short assignments	<b>2.5x10</b>	<b>30%</b>	<i>See dates in schedule of assignments</i>
3 long assignments:			
1. Researcher ID memo	<b>10</b>	<b>10%</b>	<i>Tuesday March 1</i>
2. Research proposal	<b>20</b>	<b>20%</b>	<i>Tuesday March 8</i>
3. Portfolio			
- Progress report	<b>15</b>		
- Journal entries	<b>10</b>		
- Findings segment	<b>15</b>		
Total Portfolio		<b>40%</b>	<i>Friday May 13</i>
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>	

## COURSE OVERVIEW

### I. INTRODUCTION TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

1. Introduction: The nature of qualitative research - January 29
2. Research designs and multiple traditions of qualitative inquiry- February 5
3. Choosing topics, exploring questions (and closing the intro) – February 12

### II. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

4. Designing the study: frameworks, questions, problems, goals - February 19
5. Bounding the territory: cases, sites, sampling and other issues- February 26  
*Researcher identity memo due on Tuesday March 1*
6. Preparing for the field: methods; relationships; fieldwork; the ethics of qualitative research - March 4  
*Research proposal due Tuesday, March 8*
7. The art and craft of interviewing – March 11

**March 13-20 Spring Recess – [If possible, go to the field]**

### III. INTERLUDE: FROM THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE TO THE RESEARCH CRAFT *Note: we will leave 20 minutes of classes 8 and 9 to trouble shoot and discuss your fieldwork preparation and experience*

8. Multiple modes of inquiry: linking worldviews, paradigms, theoretical perspectives and methodological tools - March 25
9. Applications and illustrations – April 1

### IV. IN THE FIELD AND BEYOND: ACCESSING AND INTERPRETING DATA

*Note: field notes and interview transcripts needed for assignments on week 10*

10. Data Collection/Analysis (1): Documenting and describing - April 8
11. Collection/Analysis (2): Explaining and theorizing - April 15

### V. MAKING SENSE: FINDING MEANING, WRITING AND SHARING INSIGHTS

12. Drawing and verifying conclusions; standards of quality - April 22
13. Developing a credible story: theorizing & constructing credible arguments – April 29
14. Sharing the findings: in conversation with the literature AND Conclusions: the craft of qualitative research – May 6 (**Will propose that class meets until 3 pm**)

*Portfolios and progress reports due on Friday May 13*

## Course outline and schedule of assignments

### I. THE NATURE OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

#### Week 1 (January 29): Introduction – The nature of qualitative research

##### **Goals:**

- Gain an understanding of the qualitative research process and the nature of qualitative data
- Develop mutual expectations for the course
- Conduct an inventory of participant experiences with qualitative research and potential ideas for mock projects

##### **Reading assignment:**

- Booth et al: Preface, Prologue, Ch 1 and 2 (all of section one)
- Patton, Q.M. 2005. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. 3d edition. M. Thousand Oaks, Sage. Chapters 1 (3-29) and 2 (33-73).
- Miles, Huberman & Saldaña: Pages 10-14 (The Nature...& Our View...)
- Hunt, M. 2010. "Active Waiting": Habits and the practice of conducting qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. 9(1):69-76

##### **Assignment (1):**

(Individual) Please complete the following exercise BEFORE our first class (Friday, Jan 29): Go to a restaurant or coffee shop of your choice and purchase something to eat. For 30 minutes (please time them) do a systematic observation of what is going on. You should take notes during this observation. Consider the following questions: What is going on? How is it going on? What does the researcher feel about this observation?

After leaving the site, sit down in a quiet place, read your notes, complete them and write a few questions that come to mind about "being in the field". Please bring to class the notes and questions to share with the group.

#### Week 2 (February 5): Research designs and multiple traditions of qualitative inquiry

##### **Goals:**

- Gain an understanding of the various qualitative research traditions and their differences
- Become familiar with research design variations vis a vis the various approaches to qualitative research
- Discuss mock project and form teams

### Reading assignment:

- Cresswell, J. 2013. Chapters 4 and 5 (69-128)
- *Because Cresswell does not include Action Research in his traditions, the following two readings complement Cresswell's reading:*
  - Ospina, S. & G. Anderson. (2014). "The Action Turn". In D. Coghlan & M. Brydon-Miller (Eds). *The Sage Encyclopedia of Action Research*. London: Sage Pu. PP. 18-21
  - Example: Burns, D. 2012. "Participatory Systemic Inquiry". *IDS Bulletin*, Vol. 43 Num. 3, May 2012 (pp. 88-100).
- Miles, Huberman & Saldaña: Pages 8-10 (Genres... & Analytic Methods...)
- Atkinson, P. 2005. Qualitative Research—Unity and Diversity. In *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*. 6(3): Art. 26

### Recommended:

- Guijt, I. (2014) *Participatory Approaches*. Methodological Briefs, Impact Evaluation No. 5. Florence, Italy: Unicef Office of Research, pp. 1-19

### Assignment (2):

(Individual) a) In bullet form, indicate which two approaches from Creswell's book appealed to you most and why (consider also *Action Research* as an alternative approach, per Ospina & Anderson description); react briefly to the examples for those approaches provided in Creswell's Chapter 5 and appendix, (and consider Burns as an example for action research): did they work for you? b) for the approach that appeals the most to you, do a search in google scholar and find a contemporary article that uses that particular approach explicitly; report on the outcome of trying to find the defining features of that approach in the study (please no more than two pages for this entire assignment, and less is better!)

**ATTENTION: Follow instructions in this box to be ready to do Assignment 8 (See Week 9, April 1).**

→ Contact the following service for a time slot between Weeks 7 (March 11) and Week 9 (April 1) to be ready to write a brief report on Week 9:

Data Services, NYU Libraries & ITS, (212) 998-3434, [data.services@nyu.edu](mailto:data.services@nyu.edu)  
<http://guides.nyu.edu/c.php?g=277048&p=1846879>

→ Request an appointment to receive training on software programs for qualitative research. Specifically, request an overview (and brief comparison) of ATLAS Ti and InVivo qualitative analysis software packets. Normally this training should last between 60 and 90 minutes. Do not do this training before March 11, as you won't absorb.

(You will report on this introductory training (on Week 9); you may decide to request further training, as this student service is free. This is not required, but can be very helpful if you plan to do qualitative research and want to use the software for this class and for future work).

### **Week 3 (February 12): Choosing topics, exploring questions (team work and other follow-up conceptual issues ref. the nature of qualitative research)**

#### **Goals:**

- Deepen understanding of the nature of QR, its differences from quantitative approaches, its multiple traditions and research design concepts
- Locating qualitative research methods in the context of the public administration field
- Practice developing research topic and initiating team projects

#### **Reading assignment:**

- Maxwell, Chapters 1 and 2
- Miles, Huberman & Saldaña: Pages 18-20 (Introduction and Tight versus...)
- Haverland, M. and D. Yanow. 2012. A Hitchhiker's Guide to the Public Administration Research Universe: Surviving Conversations on Methodologies and Methods. *Public Administration Research* 72(3): 401-408.
- Mahoney, J. & G. Goertz. 2006. A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research. *Political Analysis*. 14:227-249.
- Piore, MJ. 2006. Qualitative Research: does it fit in economics? *European Management Review*. 3: 17-23

#### **Recommended:**

- Alvesson, M. and D. Kärreman. 2007. Constructing Mystery: Empirical matters in theory development. *Academy of Management Review*. 32(4): 1265-1281.

**In preparation for our discussion of the mock project:** Meet with your partner(s) and discuss more in depth the mock project you would like to conduct. No need to be concerned yet about specific approach to inquiry, unless you already have selected one. Discuss and get a general agreement on: what is your topic and your tentative research question? Why do you think it is important? Be prepared to share in class. You may want to jot these ideas down but I will not be collecting them (until next week).

*Hint: in the context of this course, to ensure efficiency in your learning process, choose a topic in which at least one of you (and even better, both) has some familiarity with the literature, rather than one where you would have to start from scratch.*

## II. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

### **Week 4 (February 19): Designing the study: frameworks, questions, problems, goals**

#### **Goals:**

- Practice framing research questions and developing theoretical frameworks

#### **Reading assignment:**

- Maxwell, Chapters 3 and Ch 4
- Miles, Huberman & Saldaña: Pages 20-28 (Building a Conceptual.. & Formulating Research...)
- Booth et al: Part 2 – Prologue, Ch 3 and 4

#### **Recommended:**

- Booth et al: Ch 5 and 6 (*for issues associated with literature review*)
- Alvesson, M. & J. Sandberg. 2011. Generating research questions through problematization. *Academy of Management Review*. 36(2): 247-271

#### **Assignment (3):**

(Team) As a team, write and bring to class a tentative research question and a tentative flow diagram (graph) of your conceptual framework. **Frame the question using the format proposed by Booth et al on pages 48 and 61** (48 gives you the basic structure, 61 a further elaboration of the same format for academic applied research projects). For the flow diagram specify the critical elements of a preliminary conceptual framework to address the question, **as proposed by Maxwell in Ch 3** (Miles, Huberman and Saldaña will also help but use Maxwell's format). Attach a short list of references that provide insights into your proposed question (i.e. start reading about the topic).

**NOTE:** This week seems deceptively light in readings. Please make sure you leave time to process and do the assignments. They are slow reading.

### **Week 5 (February 26): Bounding the territory: cases, sites, sampling and other issues**

#### **Goals:**

- Developing an understanding of the different conceptual meanings of “the case”
- Practice “bounding” the research study: making decisions about case and site selection, (units of analysis, and sampling



### Reading assignment:

- Miles, Huberman & Saldaña: Pages 28-37 (Defining...& Sampling...)
- Ragin, C. 1992. Introduction: “Cases of What is a Case” (p. 1-17) and Chapter 10: “ ‘Casing’ and the process of Social Inquiry” (p. 217-226) in Ragin, C. and H. Becker (ed). *What is a Case: Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Shively, W.P. 2006. Case Selection: Insights from Rethinking Social Inquiry. Symposium on Rethinking Social Inquiry. *Political Analysis*. 14: 344-347.

### Recommended:

- Gibbert, M. & L.B. Nair. 2013. Towards Rigorous Case Study Research: How replication logic enhances internal and external validity. *Academy of Management Proceedings*. 2013:1 (8 pages).

### Assignment (4):

(Team) Re-frame your research question and flow diagram based on your early incursions into your literature review to ground your project. Further clarify your unit of analysis and, using the new question, construct a matrix specifying tentatively your sampling frame (see hand-out from Marshal and Rossman to be distributed in class). Please turn in the new question, flow diagram and sampling frame.

**Researcher identity memo due on Tuesday March 1-** Follow instructions on page 34 (EXERCISE 2.1) in Maxwell (see discussion and examples on pages 34-38 and 46-47). The memo should address questions 1 and 2 posed in the exercise (but feel free to be creative in their exposition). Memo should not be longer than 3 pages.

**Week 6 (March 4): Preparing for the field: methods; relationships; fieldwork; the ethics of qualitative research** [please note that there are team and individual assignments due this week].

**NOTE:** By this time you must be getting ready to enter the field, have started to make contacts and develop relationships, as well as learning all you can about the context of your site and case. By week 7 you should be in the field starting to access data by way of interviews, formal documents, and if possible, observations.

### Goals:

- Develop an understanding of data collection instruments and techniques (the mechanics of fieldwork, interviewing and questionnaires, the management of tools, equipment, field notes, data, etc).
- Develop an understanding of the relational dimensions of qualitative data collection
- Explore ethical issues in qualitative research and gain sensitivity toward vulnerable

populations

**Reading assignment:**

- Maxwell, Chapter 5
- Yanow, D. and P.Schwartz-Shea. 2012. Seeing with an Ethnographic Sensibility (Chapter 10). In Yanow, D. and P.Schwartz-Shea (ed). *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Methods and the Interpretive Turn*. New York: M.E. Sharp. Pp. 194-208.
- Miles, Huberman & Saldaña: Pages 37-42 (Instrumentation); 45(bottom)-52 (Management issues...) and 55-68 (Ethical Issues in Analysis)
- See box (next page) Quinn Patton's Chapter 6 (critical for your fieldwork, but won't discuss in class).

**Recommended:**

- Yanow, Dvora and Schartz-Shea, Peregrine. 2008. Reforming Institutional Review Board Policy: Issues in Implementation and Field Research. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 40 (1): 483-94
- Gullemin, M., and Gilliam L. 2004. "Ethics, Reflexivity, and 'Ethically Important Moments' in Research," *Qualitative Inquiry* 10(2): 261-280.
- Schnarch, B. (2005). *Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP) or Self-Determination Applied to Research*. Ottawa: National Aboriginal Health Organization.  
[http://www.naho.ca/documents/fnc/english/FNC\\_OCAPCriticalAnalysis.pdf](http://www.naho.ca/documents/fnc/english/FNC_OCAPCriticalAnalysis.pdf)
- First Nations Center. 2007. *Considerations and templates for Ethical Research Practices*. Ottawa: National Aboriginal Health Organization.  
[http://www.naho.ca/documents/fnc/english/FNC\\_ConsiderationsandTemplatesInformationResource.pdf](http://www.naho.ca/documents/fnc/english/FNC_ConsiderationsandTemplatesInformationResource.pdf)

**Assignment (5):**

(Team) Using *the next iteration* of your research question and conceptual framework, follow instructions for Exercise 5.2 in Maxwell, (p. 119-120) to develop a Questions and Methods Matrix (see example on pages 117-19). (Please include the next iteration of your research question and conceptual framework so I can understand the Matrix)

**Assignment (6):**

(Individual) Go to the web page of NYU's Review Committee on Research with Human Subjects, and review the first five chapters of the tutorial, doing the mini tests at the end of each. **DO NOT DO THE FULL TEST AND DO NOT SEND A TEST TO THE COMMITTEE.** Look for model letters of informed consent and think about how they could apply to your mock project. Hand in short write up (a paragraph) about what surprised you of the exercise. Be prepared to talk about this assignment in class.

**ATTENTION: Research proposal is due on Tuesday, March 8th** - As you work on your research proposal you will find helpful reading Maxwell: Ch 6, 7 and one of the two Appendixes. In Ch 6, Maxwell discusses issues of validity. We will come back to issues of quality (including validity) in a future class, but in order to consider some of these issues in your proposal, it is good to anticipate that discussion at this point. **Ch 7 and the Appendixes should be very helpful, as they address directly issues associated with writing a research proposal and two possible examples of one.** See instructions in separate document in NYUClasses.

Start thinking about questions for your interview protocol. The Question and Methods Matrix will help a lot. You do not need to have the full interview protocol for the research proposal but you should be able to discuss the broad categories within which you will locate the specific questions.

**Looking ahead:** Getting an early overview of what you will be doing when you enter the field will help you view the work of the next weeks in a more realistic light. Doing qualitative research is an iterative process, but teaching qualitative research can only happen in a linear fashion. In that spirit, consider starting to work on the following readings, which will be helpful as you enter the field.

**Required: Chapter 6 of Quinn Patton (on reserve) will be very helpful for your fieldwork preparation and actual activities:** Fieldwork strategies and observation methods (pp. 259-332).

**Recommended:**

ON FIELDNOTES: Emerson, R. R. Fretz and L. Shaw. 1995. Selected excerpts from *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Pages: 4-16, 17-35; 39-42; 49-52; 63-65;

ON ANALYTICAL DISPLAYS: Copeland, A.J & Agosto, D.E. (2012) Diagrams and Relational Maps. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 11(5): 513-533.

**If you have no experience doing qualitative research I recommend** Ely et al. (1991). Chapter 3: "Doing". In Ely et al (ed). *Doing Qualitative Research: Circles within Circles*. New York: The Falmer Press, pp. 41-105. [If you cannot read the entire piece, skim and read more carefully pages 69-80 on logs].

## **Week 7 (March 11): The art and craft of interviewing**

**Goals:**

- Develop (or deepen) your sensibility around interviewing, understood as "a conversational encounter"
- Consider the different types of interviews (and targets) that can be used during qualitative research

- Practice writing questions and asking questions in the context of interviewing

**Reading assignment:**

- Quinn Patton, Chapter 7: Qualitative interviewing (pp. 339-427)
- Beuthin, R. 2014. Breathing in the Mud: Tensions in Narrative Interviewing. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. 13: 122-134

**Recommended:**

If you have not done interviews, I **strongly recommend** that you complement your readings with these very simple but powerful “brief” on Interviewing:

- McDonal, B. & P. Rogers. (2014) *Interviewing*. Methodological Briefs, Impact Evaluation No. 12. Florence, Italy: Unicef Office of Research, pp. 1-11

**Assignment (7):**

(Team) Interview protocol draft.

**March 13-20 Spring Recess – [If possible, go to the field]**

***REMINDER: YOU WILL NEED INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS AND/OR NOTES BY WEEK 10. This means you must plan to do your observations and interviews during the next two weeks (if you have not already started)! AS WE MOVE FORWARD WE WILL LEAVE 20 MINUTES OF CLASSES IN WEEKS 8 AND 9 TO TROUBLE SHOOT AND DISCUSS YOUR DATA COLLECTION EXPERIENCE, AS WELL AS TO EXPLORE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE DISCUSSIONS DURING THE INTERLUDE.***

### III. INTERLUDE: FROM THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE TO THE RESEARCH CRAFT

#### **Week 8 (March 25): Multiple modes of inquiry: linking worldviews, paradigms, theoretical perspectives and methodological tools**

*NOTE: The next two classes represent a parenthesis from the discussion of the knots and bolts of doing qualitative research. We will engage in a conversation already introduced briefly by several readings earlier in the course. While we do this, you will continue to work outside class preparing for and doing fieldwork. You should begin to gather documents about your site(s) and case(s). It is a good time to remember that you should be journaling, especially about ethical issues and entering the field.*

#### **Goals:**

- Explore and become conversant on the philosophical debates about scientific inquiry
- Distinguish the philosophical assumptions behind different approaches (to research and the implications for research design and implementation
- Explore your own positioning within these debates

#### **Reading assignment:**

- Yanow, D. and P.Schwartz-Shea. 2014. Wherefore “Interpretive”: An Introduction (pp. xiii-xxxi) In Yanow, D. and P.Schwartz-Shea (ed). *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Methods and the Interpretive Turn*. New York: M.E. Sharp.
- Shwartz-Shea, P. & D. Yanow. 2012. “Ways of Knowing: Research questions and Logics of Inquiry” (Chapter 2, pp 25-43) **AND** “Starting from Meaning: Contextuality and its implications”(Chapter 3, pp. 44-53). In *Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes*. New York: Routledge [e-book accessible at NYU Library]. Pp 25-43
- Ospina, S. & M. Uhl-Bien. 2012. Mapping the Terrain (Introduction, pp.xix-xxxiv only) **AND** Exploring the Competing Basis for Legitimacy (Chapter 1, pp. 1-40). In Uhl-Bien, M. and S. Ospina (Eds.). (2012) *Advancing relational leadership research*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age.
- Raadschelders, J.C. (2011). The future of the study of Public Administration: Embedding research object and methodology in epistemology and ontology. *Public Administration Review*. 71 no6 N 2011 p. 916-924.
- Miles, Huberman & Saldaña: Pages 6 (bottom)-7 (our Orientation)

#### **Week 9 (April 1): Applications and illustrations**

#### **Goals:**

- Practice making logical connections between paradigms, theories, methods and

practice

- Apply philosophy of science concepts to the problem of the split between qualitative and (quantitative approaches to research, and between philosophical paradigms

### Reading assignment:

- Shwartz-Shea, P. & D. Yanow. 2012. “Speaking Across Epistemic Communities” (Chapter 8, pp. 130-139) In *Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes*. New York: Routledge [e-book accessible at NYU Library].
- Burton-Jones A., E. McLean & E. Monod. 2014. Theoretical perspectives in IS research: from variance and process to conceptual latitude and conceptual fit. *European Journal of Information Systems*. 00:1-16 Pages to read will be announced.
- Tarrow, S. 2010. “Bridging the Quantitative-Qualitative Divide”. In Brady, H. and D. Collier (eds) *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield Pu, pp. 101-110.
- Greene, J, L. Benjamin & L. Goodyear. (2001) The Merits of Mixing Methods in Evaluation. *Evaluation*. 7(1): 25-44.
- Lin, A. 1998. “Bridging Positivist and Interpretivist approaches to Qualitative Methods” in *Policy Studies Journal*, Spring, 26(1): 162-180. **PLEASE ONLY READ THE FIRST HALF: PP. 162-168**

### Recommended:

- There are several short papers on combining qualitative-quantitative research in Appendix 3 of: Charles Ragin, Joane Nagel and Patricia White, *Workshop on Scientific Foundations of Qualitative Research* (2004) [ <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2004/nsf04219/nsf04219.pdf> ]
- I’ve included in the recommended NYUClasses file a packet of critiques of an article on Narrative Policy Studies, for those interested in better seeing the debate in action. Highly recommended!!! The original article criticized is called:
  - Jones, M.D & C. M. Randaelli. (2015) The Narrative Policy Framework: Child or Monster? *Critical Policy Studies*, 9(3): 339-355

### Assignment (8):

(Individual) After having taken the training on software programs for qualitative research with Data Services (NYU Libraries and ITS – see instructions of Week 2 of this syllabus), please write a short memo (no more than one page) describing your key learning and observations about the use of this type of software. Which program did you like best, why, and how helpful do you think it will be for this course? If you decide not to use it, still explain why not, and how helpful is the knowledge for future reference.

## IV. IN THE FIELD AND BEYOND: ACCESSING AND INTERPRETING DATA

*ATTENTION: the readings from weeks 10 through 14 seem deceptively short: we will read lots from Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, which is dense and requires much time to be processed. Please make sure you leave sufficient time to do them.*

### **Week 10 (April 8): Data Collection/Analysis (1): Documenting and describing**

#### **Goals:**

- Understand and practice the early steps of analysis: documentation; codes and coding; exploring and describing; the role of memos, analytic texts and visual displays

#### **Reading assignment:**

- Patton, MQ. (2005). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. Chapter 8, ONLY 452-466.
- Miles, Huberman & Saldaña: Read Chapters 4 and 5 carefully. Then scan Chapters 6-8 (read the introduction and the introduction to each section and choose a few specific methods to study, searching for what you think can be helpful for your own project).

#### **Choose 1:**

- Saz-Carranza, A. & S. Ospina. (2011). The behavioral dimension of governing inter-organizational goal-directed networks: Managing the unity / diversity tension. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*. 21(2): 327-365.
- Coslovsky, S. 2014. Economic Development without Pre-requisites. *World Development*. 54: 32-45

#### **Recommended reading:**

- Booth et al: Ch 15 (excellent, though basic, overview of the use of visual displays, mostly focusing on numbers and statistics)

#### **Assignment (9):**

(Team) Develop a tentative coding scheme of your project and use the transcripts of your interviews to apply and refine it. Write a memo of what you learned from doing this exercise. Include as an appendix of the memo the original coding scheme with brief definitions of the codes and the next iteration produced by the analysis. Be prepared to discuss how your coding evolved.

## **Week 11 (April 15): Collection/Analysis (2): Explaining and theorizing**

### **Goals:**

- Develop an understanding of and practice causal analysis and explanation

### **Reading assignment:**

- Patton, MQ. (2005). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. Chapter 8, ONLY pages 478- end of 481.
- Byrne, D. (2013) *Evaluating Complex Social Interventions in a Complex World. Evaluation*. 19(3): 217-228
- Miles, Huberman & Saldaña: Chapter 9 (see instructions for group assignment before reading, and read selectively if needed)

### **Choose 1:**

- Mele, V., A. Compagni & M. Cavazza (2013) *Governing through Evidence: A Study of Technological Innovation in Health Care. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, March, 25, 1-35.
- Greene, D., P. Tehranifar, L. Hernandez-Cordero & M. Thomposon Fulilove. 2011. I used to Cry Every Day: A Model of the Family Process of Managing Displacement. *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*. 88(3):403-416.

### **Recommended:**

- Miles, Huberman & Saldaña: Chapter 10
- Riccucci, N.M. (2010). Theory building through qualitative approaches. In N.M. Riccucci. *Public Administration: Traditions of Inquiry and Philosophies of Knowledge*. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press (pp. 65-96).
- Eisenhardt, K. & Graebner, M., (2007). Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges. *Academy of Management Journal* 50(1): 25-32.

### **Assignment (10):**

(Team) Create an explanatory effects matrix (p. 228 in MH&S), or a causal network (pp. 234-253) with the accompanying analytical memo that makes a claim inferred from your data. Bring copies of the matrix for all. Be prepared to discuss how Lin's article and Patton's insights helped inform your analysis.



## V. MAKING SENSE: FINDING MEANING, WRITING AND SHARING INSIGHTS

### Week 12 (April 22): Drawing and verifying conclusions; standards of quality

#### Goals:

- Develop an understanding of and practice of tactics to draw and verify conclusions
- Developing an understanding of quality criteria and qualitative research; practice applying these criteria to evaluate good qualitative research

#### Reading assignment:

- Miles, Huberman & Saldaña: Chapter 11. Concentrate on last two sections (Standards for... and Analytic documentation), but see assignment for other sections.
- Lin, A. 1998. "Bridging Positivist and Interpretivist approaches to Qualitative Methods" in *Policy Studies Journal*, Spring, 26(1): 162-180. **READ SECOND HALF, PP. 168-180**
- Schwartz-Shea, P. (2014) Judging Quality: Evaluative Criteria and Epistemic Communities. In Yanow, D. and P. Schwartz-Shea (ed). *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Methods and the Interpretive Turn*. New York: M.E. Sharp. Pp. 120-146.

#### Choose 1:

- Jennings, J. (2010) School Choice or School's Choice? Managing in an Era of Accountability. *Sociology of Education* 83(3):227-247
- Dias, J.J & S. Maynard-Moody. (2006) For profit welfare: contracts, conflicts and the performance paradox. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 17: 189-211.

#### Recommended:

- Dodge, J., S. Ospina, and E. Foldy. "Integrating Rigor and Relevance in Public Administration Scholarship: The Contribution of Narrative Inquiry", *Public Administration Review*, May/June 2005, Vol 65, No. 3, pp. 286-300.
- Gibbert, M. W. Ruigrok & B. Wicki. 2008. What passes as rigorous case study? *Strategic Management Journal*. 29(13): 1465-1474

#### Assignment (11):

(Team) After skimming sections on Tactics in MHS Chapter 11, choose ONE tactic from either of the two sections to discuss in class. In addition, write a bulleted memo identifying the key standards that guarantee good quality of your project and explain why you chose those and how you have tried to attain them. Be prepared to discuss.

## **Week 13 (April 29): Developing a credible story: theorizing & constructing credible arguments**

### **Goals:**

- Understand the challenges of writing and reporting research findings
- Learn to identify approaches to writing in public policy, public administration, (and public management

### **Reading assignment:**

- Creswell, J.W. (2013) Ch 9.
- Wilkinson, C. (2014) On not just finding what you (thought you) were looking for: Reflections on Fieldwork Data and Theory. In Yanow, D. and P.Schwartz-Shea (ed). *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Methods and the Interpretive Turn*. New York: M.E. Sharp. Pp 387-405

### **Choose 1:**

- Iskander, N., N. Lowe & C. Riordan. (2010). The rise and fall of a micro-learning region: Mexican immigrants and construction in center-south Philadelphia. *Environment and Planning A*. 42: 1595 -1612.
- Micheli, P. & A. Neely (2010). Performance Measurement in the Public Sector in England: Searching for the Golden Thread. *Public Administration Review*. July/August, 2010: 591-600.

### **Recommended:**

- Booth et al: Part 3 – 9-11 - [This reading requires concentration. The good news it that it is helpful not just for this class but in general, for any scholarly writing].

## **Week 14 (May 6): Sharing the findings: in conversation with the literature**

### **Goals:**

- Continue to gain exposure to ways of presenting findings and identifying ways to connect to broader field conversations
- Explore insights about own approaches and preferences in qualitative research
- Give closure to the course

### **Reading assignment:**

- Pratt, M. (2009). From the Editors: For the lack of a boilerplate: tips on writing up (and reviewing) qualitative research. *Academy of Management Journal* 52(5):856-862.
- Tong, A., P. Sainsbury & J. Craig. (2007) Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research (COREG): a 32-item checklist for interviews and focus groups. *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*: 19(6): 349-357.

**Choose 1:**

- Instead of reading a new article, you will return to the one you chose in Class 2, please re-read it and see individual assignment below.

**Assignment (12):**

(Individual): Go back to the original article you googled for the assignment in Class 2. ***Please bring copies of the abstract for all other class members*** so we have it with us while discussing it. Jot down a few bullets around the following questions (to be collected), and be prepared to discuss in class:

- 1) What is your overall evaluation of the quality of this article, after the past 13 classes? What's primarily missing, and what works well? How did you read it differently and why?
- 2) Using the criteria that are presented by Prat, to what extent does the article work as a model piece of qualitative research (or not- if too much is missing). You can choose to focus on particular criteria, of course.

**Recommended:**

- Ragin, C., J. Nagel and P. White. 2004. *Workshop on Scientific Foundations of Qualitative Research*. Washington DC: NSF - (read pp. 3-18 and then choose and read two short papers from Appendix 3).  
<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2004/nsf04219/nsf04219.pdf> ]
- Lamont, M. & P. White (2009). *Workshop on Interdisciplinary Standards for Systematic Qualitative Research*. Washington DC: NSF (read pp. 3-19 and then choose and read two short papers from Appendixes 3, 4, 5 **or** 6).
- Becker, H. (2009) How to find out how to do qualitative research (a critique of the two reports above)

**(Will propose that this final class meets until 3 pm)**

<p><b>ATTENTION: Portfolios (including team progress reports) due on Friday May 13<sup>th</sup></b></p>
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